The Buddha: A Drama in Five Acts and Four Interludes

Paul Carus

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Title: The Buddha: A Drama in Five Acts and Four Interludes

Author: Paul Carus

Release date: September 27, 2007 [eBook #22782]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Marilynda Fraser-Cunliffe, Sankar Viswanathan,
and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at
http://www.pgdp.net

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Transcriber's Note:

The spelling, accents, and diacritical marks of Sanskrit names is not consistent in the book. The Table of Contents is not part of the original book.

THE BUDDHA

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS AND FOUR INTERLUDES

BY

PAUL CARUS

CHICAGO

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING CO.

LONDON: 149 Strand

1913

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DIRECTIONS TO THE STAGE MANAGER.

The scenery can be made very attractive by both historical accuracy and a display of Oriental luxury, but the drama may easily be performed with simple means at a small cost without losing its dramatic effect. Some of the changes, however, should be very rapid. The interludes can be replaced by lantern slide pictures, or may be omitted.

If the interludes are retained there need not be any intermission in the whole drama.

The music for the Buddha's Hymn of Victory, pages 5 and 39 (see *The Open Court*, XIX, 49); the dirge on page 19, (*Open Court*, XIX, 567); Yasōdhara's Song, page 37 (*Open Court*, XVIII, 625); and the Doxology, page 63 and at the end (*Open Court*, XVIII, 627), may be found in a collection entitled *Buddhist Hymns* (Chicago, Open Court Publishing Co., 1911).

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

All vowels to be pronounced as in Italian.

Siddháttha Gótama, Prince of the Sakyas, later on the Buddha	*B*
Suddhōdana, King of the Sakyas, father of Siddháttha	*S*
Pajāpati, Queen of the Sakyas, aunt and stepmother of Siddháttha	*P*
Princess Yasōdhara, Siddháttha's wife	*Y*
Rāhula, Yasōdhara's son	*R*
Devadatta, brother of Yasōdhara	*Dd*
Kāla Udāyin, a gardener's son	*K*
Gopa, Yasōdhara's maid	*G*
Visākha, a Brahman, Prime Minister of Suddhōdana	*V*
Dēvala, a Sakya Captain	*D*
Bimbisara, King of Magadha	*Bb*
Ambapali, King Bimbisara's favorite	*Ap*
Nāgadēva, Prime Minister of Mágadha, leader of an embassy	*N*
General Siha, in the service of King Bimbisara	*GS*
Jēta, Prince of Northern Kosala	*J*
Anātha Pindika, a wealthy man of Sāvattha	*A*
Māra, the Evil One	*M*

Channa, Prince Siddháttha's groom	*Ch*
Master of Ceremonies at Magadha	*Mc*
General Siha's Captain	*C*
A Brahman Priest	*Pr*
A Farmer	*F*
Servant	*St*
Ministers, Officers, Soldiers, Trumpeters, Villagers, A Shepherd.	
Singers: Māra's Daughters, Angels, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.	

GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN TERMS.

Buddha, the Enlightened One, the Saviour.

Bodhi, enlightenment or wisdom.

Bodhisatta, a seeker of the bodhi, one who endeavors to become a Buddha.

Bodhi tree, the tree under which Buddha acquires enlightenment.

Muni, thinker or sage.

Sakyamuni, the Sage of the Sakyas, the Buddha.

Tathāgata, a title of Buddha, which probably means "The Perfect One," or "he who has reached completion."

Nirvāna (in Pali, "Nibbana") eternal bliss.

Kapilavatthu, capital of the Sakyas.

Kōsala, an Indian state divided into Northern and Southern Kōsala.

Sāvátthi, capital of Northern Kōsala.

Jētavana, the pleasure garden of Prince Jēta at Sāvátthi.

Mágadha, a large kingdom in the Ganges Valley.

Rājagáha, capital of Magadha.

Uruvēla, a place near Benares.

Arāda and U'draka, two philosophers.

Licchávi, a princely house of Vesali.

Nirgrántha (lit. "liberated from bonds"), a name adopted by the adherents of the Jaina sect.

Indra, in the time of Buddha worshiped by the people as the most powerful god.

Issara, the Lord, a name of God Indra.

Yama, the god of death.

Káli, a Brahman goddess, called also Durga.

ACT I.

FIRST SCENE.

[A tropical garden in Kapilavatthu, in the background mountains, at a distance the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas. On the right near the front a marble bench surrounded with bushes. Further back the palace entrance of the Raja's residence. Above the entrance a balcony. On the left a fortified gate with a guard house; all built luxuriously in antique Indian style.]

Present: SUDDHODANA, *the king* (*S*); PAJAPATI, *the queen* (*P*), *and the minister of state* VISAKHA (*V*).

S. My son Siddhattha truly loves his wife,
And since their wedlock has been blessed by this
Sweet, promising, this hale and healthy child,
His melancholy will give way to joy,
And we reclaim his noble energies
To do good service for our race and state.
New int'rests and new duties give new courage
And thus this babe will prove his father's saviour
For he will tie his soul to life again.

P. I fear his grief lies deeper than you think.

S. What sayest thou, my trusty counselor?

V. This is the last hope which I have for him,
I followed your advice and tried all means
To cure Siddhattha of his pensive mood.
I taught him all that will appeal to man:
The sports of youth, the joy of poetry
And art, the grandeur of our ancient lore,
The pleasures e'en of wanton sense; but naught
Would satisfy the yearnings of his heart.

S. Yet for religion he shows interest:
He ponders on the problems of the world.

V. Indeed he ponders on life's meaning much,

Investigates the origin of things
But irreligious are his ways of thought.
He shows no reverence for Issara,
And Indra is to him a fairy tale.
He grudgeth to the gods a sacrifice
And sheddeth tears at immolated lambs.
Oh no! he's not religious. If he were,
His ills could easily be cured by faith,
By confidence in Issara, the Lord.

S. What then is your opinion of the case?

V. Siddhattha is a youth of rarest worth,
And he surpasseth men in every virtue
Except in one.—He is too independent:
He recognizeth no authority,
Neither of men nor gods. He suffereth
[*More and more impressively*]
From the incurable disease of thought.

S. Cure thought with thought, teach him philosophy,
Show him the purpose of our holy writ.
Instruct him in the meaning of the Vedas,
Reveal to him their esoteric sense.

V. My lord, I did, but he is critical,
He makes objections and will not believe.
He raises questions which I cannot answer,
And his conclusions are most dangerous.

P. It seems to me that you exaggerate;
Siddhattha is not dangerous. He is
As gentle as my sister was, his mother,
And almost overkind to every one.

V. I know, my gracious lady, but e'en kindness
May harmful be, if it is out of place.

S. I see no danger in his gentle nature.

V. But he lacks strength, decision, warlike spirit.

S. That cometh with maturer years.

*V.*I doubt it:
Your son, my Lord, not only hath no faith
In holy writ, neither does he believe
In caste-distinction, and he would upset
The sanctioned order of our institutions.
He would abolish sacrifice and holdeth
The Brahman ritual in deep contempt.

S. Your words alarm me.

*V.*Rightly so; I fear
That he will stir the people to rebellion;
But since a child is born to him, his mind
May turn from dreams to practical affairs.
There are some men who care not for themselves,
Who scorn high caste, position, wealth and honor,
So far as they themselves may be concerned,
But they are anxious for their children's fortune,
And so Siddhattha soon may change his views.

S. Let us be patient for a while yet longer.
Keep everything unpleasant out of sight,
Invite him merry company. Remove
His gloomy cousin Devadatta. He tries
To reach a state of bliss by fasts,
His very play is penance and contrition.

P. Ananda is a better boon companion,
He is not so morose as Devadatta.

S. Neither is he the right friend for my son.
I grant he has a loving disposition,
But he is pensive too. Surround Siddhattha
With lads such as the gardner's jolly son,
Kala Udayin. Like a lark he warbles!
Would there were more like him. He jokes and laughs

And never makes a sullen face. But tell me
How is to-day Kala Udayin's father?

V. His sickness turns from bad to worse. I fear
He cannot live.

S. [*with concern*] Have him removed from here;
Siddhattha likes him much and if he knew
Udayin's sorry fate, it might undo
All good effects of joyful fatherhood.

V. The best will be to move him in the night.

S. Move him by night, and do it soon.—But hush,
Yasodhara is coming with her babe.

> YASODHARA (*Y*) *and two attendant maids, one carries an umbrella, shading the Princess; the other,* GOPA (*G*), *carries the infant.*

P. [*meets her and kisses her.*]
Welcome, thou sweetest flower of our garden,
Thou ray of sunshine in Siddhattha's life.

S. My dearest daughter! how is Rahula?

Y. My royal father, Rahula is growing,
And he increases daily in his weight;
To-day he smiled at me most cunningly.
I'll lay him down, for he is fast asleep.

> *All enter the palace. The stage remains empty a moment. Soft, serious music (Buddha's "Hymn of Victory") is heard.*

SECOND SCENE.

SIDDHATTHA (*B*) *and* KALA UDAYIN (*K*) *enter*.

K. My sweet Prince, when you are king you must appoint me court jester. Will you, my good Lord? We two are good contrasts: You full of dignity upon a royal throne, a golden crown upon your head, the scepter in your hand, and I dressed in motley with cap and bells. Heigh ho! That will be jolly. And after all we are so much alike!

B. A royal crown shall never grace my head.

K. And why should it not, sweet Prince?

B. I have a higher aim, a greater mission.
What is a kingdom? What are wealth and power?
What crown and scepter? They are transient things,
I yearn for the Immortal state, Nirvana.

K. Then wilt thou be a Buddha? Oh, even then will I follow thee.

He kneels down with clasped hands.

Wilt thou a holy Buddha be,
O keep me in thy company
Though I'm a jester. I'll be good.
Let me attain beatitude.

B. Rise Kala, rise, I am a mortal man,
I'm not omniscient, nor have I yet
Attained the goal of goals, enlightenment.—
Tell me, why dost thou think we are alike?

K. My Lord, you have no ambition to be a king; you think the world is full of vanity, and you consider that life and its glory will pass away. That is exactly what I think. I agree with you. Only, you are of a serious disposition and take the matter to heart, while I think it is great fun. What is the use of thinking so much. We are all like bubbles: we float in the air, and then the bubble bursts and this life

is over. I am now a poor boy. I fear no change. In a future incarnation I may be born as the son of a king, like you. And think of it, after a few million years, this whole world, this big bulky stupid institution, this home of so many villains, and a couple of good ones like us two among them, the theater of rascalities, of vanities, of follies, will be scattered to the winds, as if it had never existed. Be merry, my Prince, so long as the comedy lasts.

DEVADATTA (*Dd.*) *appears in the background. His cheeks are sunken and his face is gloomy. His eye has a fanatic expression.*

B. Consider, it may prove a tragedy.

K. Let it be what it may be. To me it will be what I think it is. It is a huge joke.

B. But who will laugh at it, my friend?

*K.*I will.

B. Kala, the time will come when thou wilt weep.

K. Well then? And if I weep I shall shed tears.

Tears are a sweet relief
In anguish pain and grief.
I'll make the best of all,
Whatever may befall.

B. Thy prattle seemeth foolish, but it hideth
A deep philosophy.

*K.*Why then, good Lord,
Why wilt thou not its merry lesson learn?

B. Good Kala listen, and thou'lt understand:
There is a difference between our aims:
Thou clingest to this world of transiency,
But I seek the Etern. Thou seest not
The misery of life, for thou art happy—

Happy at least at present, though the next
Moment may find thee writhing in lament.
I seek a place of refuge whence I can
Extend my hand to help those in distress.
I will attain the state of Buddhahood
To bring deliverance to all mankind.

Dd. Why do you waste your time, Siddhattha, with this frivolous lad? What profit can there be in gossip such as you two carry on?

K. You always scold, you hollow-eyed sour face! You always moralize. Even your good brother-in-law is too worldly for you.

Dd. I did not speak to you, I addressed myself to Siddhattha.

B. Udayin has a heart, a human heart,
And all my sympathy goes out to him.

Dd. If you intend to lead a religious life and go into homelessness, you had better devote yourself to fasts and contemplations.

K. You do not talk to me, but I will talk to you, and I will tell you that in all your religious exercises you think of yourself, while Siddhattha thinks of others. I wish you would go into homelessness. Nobody would miss you here.

Addressing himself to SIDDHATTHA.

But, good my Lord, you must not go into homelessness, because you will do more harm than good.

B. How can that be, my good Kala Udayin?

K. There comes your noble wife, Yasodhara.

YASODHARA *comes, her maids with umbrellas keep at a respectful distance.*

Y. Come see our boy, he is a lovely child;
He just woke up. He maketh you forget,
The sad thoughts of your heart on world and life,
For he, the darling babe, is life himself.

KALA *flirts with* GOPA, *one of* YASODHARA'S *maids*.

B. I'll follow thee at once.

Y. [*Addressing Devadatta*]
And brother, will you come along?

*Dd.*Not I.
This child is but the beginning of new misery. It continues the old error in the eternal round on the wheel of life.

She goes into the house. DEVADATTA *withdraws into the garden*.

*B.*Now Kala speak.

K. O Prince Siddhattha, do not go into homelessness, do not leave us. I cannot live without you. You are my comfort, my teacher, my guide. I do not follow your instructions, but I love to hear them. Oh I could not live without you. Do not go, sweet Prince. Think of your wife, your dear good lovely wife, it will break her heart. Think of your child. Do not go, noble Prince. Let somebody else become the saviour of the world. Somebody else can just as well become the deliverer and the Buddha. I am sure there are many who would like to fill that place, and somebody can do it who has a less comfortable home to leave, who has a less lovely wife, who is not heir to a kingdom, and who has not such a sweet promising little boy as you have. I cannot live without you.

B. Wouldst thou go with me?

K. [*kneels*]Yes my Lord, I would.
Take me along and I will cheer you up.

B. Wouldst thou go begging food from house to house?
With bowl in hand, a homeless mendicant?

K. No sir, that would not suit me.

B. Wouldst thou by night sleep under forest trees?

K. No sir, I would catch cold. That's not for me. [*Rises*] If you needs

must go, sir, you had better go alone. That life is not for me. I will go and hear the nightingale.

SIDDHATTHA *follows the Princess into the palace*.

K.

A Buddha's life
Is not for every one.
He has no wife
No pleasure and no fun.
He cannot laugh,
He cannot cry;
He cannot love
He cannot sigh.
He's always preaching, preaching.
He's always teaching, teaching.
He wonders at time's transiency
And ponders on man's misery,
And findeth his salvation
In dreary resignation.
That life I see
Is not for me:
'Twould be ill spent;
I would not find enlightenment.
I lift not the world's woe
And in my quest for truth would fail
[*Muses a moment.*]
So I had better go
And listen to the nightingale.

Kala Udayin exit.

[During the last scene twilight has gradually set in.]

THIRD SCENE.

[The scene changes by open curtain. A veil comes down, and when its goes up again we see the bed chamber of Siddhattha and Yasodhara dimly lit by tapers.]

Yasodhara (Y) on the bed with babe in arms, two maids in waiting. Siddhattha (B) comes in. A halo of light (not too strong) surrounds his head. The princess rises, lays the babe down and advances toward her husband.

Y. O good my Lord, my Prince, my Husband!

A pause. She changes her voice as if ashamed of her show of feeling. With a matter-of-fact intonation.

Rahula fell asleep again.

B. Why art thou sad, my good Yasodhara?
I see a tear that glitters in thine eye.

Y. An unspeakable melancholy steals over my soul when I hear you speak of your religious longings.

B. Wouldest thou not rejoice if I fulfilled
My mission; if I reached the highest goal?

Y. Oh! Siddhattha! you do not love me.

B. My heart embraces all the world—and thee.

Y. If you loved me truly, there would not be much room for all the world. You think of the world all day long, and have not a minute's time for your wife.

B. I have, my dear!

Y. My noble Husband!

B. Speak!

Y. Scarcely do I dare to call you by that name. You are kind and gentle, but for a husband you are too lofty, too distant in your

dignity. It may be wrong in me, it may be sinful, but I wish you were less lofty and more loving.

B. My dearest "Wife," I call thee so on purpose—
My dearest "Wife," thou dost not understand:
The misery and ills of all the world
Weigh heavy on my heart. I'll find no peace
Until at last a remedy be found.

Y. Why dost thou trouble about others? Think of thy son, thy sweetest Rahula, and if thou lovest me a little only, think of me.

B. I think of thee, my loving Wife, but when
I think of thee I think of all—of all
The loving wives, the happy trembling mothers
All over in the world. Happy they are,
But trembling for their babes. Oh! bear in mind,
We all are in the net of sorrow caught.
This world is full of pain, disease and death;
And even death brings no relief. Because
The wheel of life rolls on. The ills continue
In births that constantly repeat themselves.

Y. Oh! do not speak of it my Lord, it makes me sad. Why do you think of misery, while here we are surrounded by wealth and comfort, and even the prospects of our future are most auspicious. Why borrow trouble before it comes?

B. My dear Yasodhara, change is the law
Of being. Now we prosper, but the wheel
Goes round and brings the high into the dust.

Y. You suffer from bad dreams;

B. Listen to me.

They sit down.

In this luxurious palace and these gardens,
Surrounding it, was I brought up with care.
I saw naught but the fair, the beautiful,
The pleasant side of life.

*Y.*I know, Siddhattha—
I know it very well.

*B.*You know, my father
Has kept me ignorant of evil things.
I might have thought that such is life throughout,
But I began to doubt and asked for leave
To see the world outside these palace walls.
Not without difficulty did I gain
Permission, and with Channa in a chariot
I drove away—when suddenly before me
I saw a sight I'd never seen before.
There was a man with wrinkled face, bleared eyes,
And stooping gait, a sight most pitiable.

Yasodhara is much moved.

While I was horror-struck, Channa passed by
Indifferent, for *he* had seen such men.
Too well he knew the common fate of all;
But I, the first time in my life, did learn
That, *if* we but live long enough, we all
Shall be such miserable wretched dotards.

Y. Too sudden came this saddening truth to you.

B. Channa sped on his horses out of town,
But there again! what an ungainly sight!
A man lay on the road-side, weak and helpless,
With trembling frame and feverish cramps.
I shut mine eyes to so much racking pain,
Still I could hear his groaning and his moaning.
"Oh, Channa," said I to the charioteer:
"Why does this happen? How deserves this man
The wretchedness of his great agonies?"
"How do I know?" said Channa, "for we all
Are subject to distemper and disease.
Sometimes the best are stricken—and must die!"
"Must die?" cried I, "What does that word portend?"
For, you must know, I never heard of death.
My father had forbidden, at his court

To speak to me of anything unpleasant.
"Yea, die!" said Channa, "Look around and see!"
Along the road a funeral procession
Moved slowly, solemnly and mournfully
And on the bier a corpse, stark, stiff and cold.

Y. Do not be troubled, death is still far off.

B. Oh do not feel secure, for the three evils
Surround us constantly and everywhere,
And even now death hovers o'er our house.
When I was born my mother went to heaven,
Which means, she died when she gave life to me.

Y. My Lord don't think of evils that are past.

B. The world's impermanence is still the same,
And all material things are conformations
Subject to pain, decay and dissolution.
Yet unconcerned in blessed carelessness
Man hunteth after pleasure. Transiency
Has set its mark on life, and there is none
Who can escape its curse. There is no mortal
Who's always happy. Misery surprises
The luckiest with unexpected terror.
Then, in addition, unseen powers breed
Most heinous maladies and fever heat.
E'en if we were exceptions, thou must grant
That finally we too will meet our doom.
The ghastly specter Death, the stern king Yama,
Awaiteth all of us. Such is our fate!

Y. O put away these gloomy thoughts, and think
Of life and love, and of thy lovely child.

B. Could we be truly happy while the world
Is filled with misery? Mine eyes are opened;
I see how death his gruesome revel holds.
He owns the world and sways its destinies.
One creature ruthlessly preys on the other,

And man, the cleverest, preys on them all.
Nor is he free, for man preys upon man!
Nowhere is peace, and everywhere is war;
Life's mighty problem must be solved at last.—
I have a mission to fulfil.

*Y.*And me
Wouldst sacrifice for a philosophy,
For the idea of an idle quest!

B. 'Tis not for me to ask whether my quest
Be vain: for me 'tis to obey the call.

Y. [*with passionate outburst*] Siddhattha, O my Lord, my husband, what wilt thou do? Dost thou forget the promise made me on our wedding day?

B. Yasodhara, a higher duty calls.
The time will come, and it is close at hand,
When I shall wander into homelessness.
I'll leave this palace and its splendid gardens
I'll leave the pleasures of this world behind
To go in quest of Truth, of saving Truth.

Yasodhara sinks on her knees before him and clasps his knees.

Y. And me, my Lord, thy quest will make a widow!
Oh, stay, and build thee here a happy home.

B. My dear Yasodhara, it cannot be.

The Prince stands lost in thought. Rahula is restless. Yasodhara rises and turns toward the child.

Y. He wakes again. I come, my babe, I come.

[The veil comes down again, and when it rises it shows the garden before the palace as in the first scene, but it is night and all is wrapped in darkness.]

FOURTH SCENE.

King Suddhodana (S) and his minister Visakha (V) come out of the entrance. Later on Captain Devala (D) and soldiers.

S. Unfortunate, most unfortunate, that Udayin died. Siddhattha will miss the gardener and will ask for him.

V. The Prince loves flowers, and he knows them all by name; he loves trees and shrubs, and praises them for yielding fruit and grain for feeding us without the need of shedding blood.

S. Have the body removed so long as it is dark.

V. The moon is full to-day and must rise in a little while.

S. Double the guards at the gate. I am afraid my son will flee. It would be a disgrace on my house to have him become a mendicant. The kings of Kosala, of Magadha, and all the others look with envy on our sturdy people; they dislike our free institutions and our warlike spirit. They would scoff at us if a Sakya prince had become a monk. But if Siddhattha does flee, I swear by Lord Indra that I shall disown him; I will no longer recognize him as my son. I will disinherit him and make Rahula my heir apparent.

Visakha looks at Suddhodana in amazement.

S. I am serious and I will do it. I swore an oath, and Issara will help me to keep it. Now go to the captain of the guards and do as I bid you.

Exit. The Minister alone.

V. Oh! What a chance for me! Siddhattha will flee, if he be not prevented; he will be disinherited. Rahula is a babe, and it will take twenty years before he grows up to manhood.—[*He muses.*] I may proceed on different lines, and one of them must certainly lead to success. I may marry the Princess and become the stepfather of the heir apparent, his guardian, the man who has him in his power—Hm! Hm! I need not plan too far ahead. And if that plan did not work, the King of Magadha would make me raja of the Sakyas, if I would recognize him as my liege.

The full moon rises and the scene becomes gradually brighter. Visakha knocks at the gate.

Who is on guard?

Officer comes out.

D. I am, my Lord, 'tis Captain Devala.

V. 'Tis well. King Suddhodana requests you to double your guard to-night, for he has reasons. Further he wants you to remove the corpse of Udayin, the gardener who died to-day of an infectious disease. Be on your guard, for where a dead body lies there are ghosts—and [*in a half whisper*] when you see demons or gods, keep yourselves, you and your men, locked up in the guard house, and the spook will pass without harm.

D. Your order shall be punctiliously obeyed.

Pays his military salute and returns to the guard house.

V. That settles the guard, and should Siddhattha flee he will find no obstacle.

Two men come out of the guard house and enter the palace with a bier. Kala Udayin comes back from the garden. Visakha retires into the background.

K. The nightingale is a sweet bird, but I like the lark better. The nightingale is more artistic, but his song is melancholy, he is so sentimental! The lark has a mere twitter like my own song, I like the lark better. How beautiful is this summer night; How glorious is the moon; how fragrant are the roses in the garden! It is a most auspicious night, and all breathes happiness.

Visakha from his hiding place watches Kala.

V. He comes in time, his presence will prosper my plans.

[Kala is lost in thought. Music, from Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, somber and as if coming from a distance, is heard.]

K. [*while the music plays*] What a strange presentiment is stealing

over my soul. Perhaps I was too happy! What does Siddhattha say?

> "All conformations always are transient,[A]
> Harrassed by sorrow, lacking a self."
>
> [A] The quoted lines run in the same rhythm as the melody and should be pronounced accordingly. See *Buddhist Hymns*, p. 22.

The men come with the corpse on the bier. Kala stops them.

K. What do you carry? Who is this? [*he shrieks*] My father! [*The carriers set the corpse down and Kala sinks down by the bier.*] Oh, my father! my dearest father! How did you die? Why did you leave me? Oh, my father! [*he sobs*].

The moon sinks behind a cloud.

Siddhattha comes.

B. What may the trouble be? I heard a shriek.

Kala raises himself half way up. The scene is bright again.

K. Oh, my Prince! See here! My father is dead! Now I know the truth as well as you. Now I feel the pain. The time has come for me to lament. I was so happy and I would not believe you.—Oh ye who are happy, think in the hour of happiness that all is subject to suffering, and the hour of suffering will come to you too. Nay more than that, the hour of death will come; it has come to my father, it will come to you and to me, and then my caroling will stop forever. Oh, my poor father!

B. How rarely is thy advent welcome, Death,
E'en this poor gardener who a servant was
His livelong days, leaves in our hearts a gap.
His son lamenteth him, and I not less;
He was my loving friend; my educator,
He had me on his knees so many a time,
To tell me how the flowers will grow and blow,
And how they prosper after rainy days.
May gentle lilies from thy ashes spring,

Decked with the purity of thine own heart,
And with their fragrance give the same delight
That in thy present life thou gavest us.

The carriers lift up the body and carry it out.

Oh, fare thee well, thou good and worthy friend,
Oh, fare thee well, but thy departure is
To me a token that my time has come.

Turning to Kala who all the while was lying prostrate weeping.

Weep not, companion of my childhood days,
But bear in mind the courage of thy mirth.
Remember all the virtues of thy father
And let them live again in thine own heart.
Thou must not yield to weakness and lamenting,
Tend to life's duties: Go and call me Channa,
Bid him to saddle Kanthaka, my steed,
And let him ready be for a night's ride.

Kala exit. Siddhattha alone.

The hour has come! and now my last farewell
To thee my wife and Rahula my son.

Siddhattha makes a few steps and halts.

This is the greatest sacrifice I bring:
I leave behind a crown without regret;
I leave the luxury of wealth and power;
I care for them as though they were but ashes
But I must also leave my wife and child:
Here I must prove the courage of my heart.

Enters the house.

FIFTH SCENE.

[The veil of clouds comes down, and when it rises we see Yasodhara's bedroom again.]

Siddhattha (B) enters. Yasodhara (Y) sleeps with the babe in her arms.

B. Here lie the rarest treasures of this life,
My noble wife, my dear boy Rahula.

Siddhattha approaches the bed.

Your sleep is sweet in your sweet innocence,
And I will not disturb your blissful rest.
I will go out in search for saving Truth
And shall not come again unless 't be found
Farewell my wife and Rahula my son.
Must I be gone? Is this, in sooth, my duty?

He goes toward the door. There he stops.

Perchance on their account I ought to stay.
But no! my father can take care of them.
It is my tender heart that makes me weak.
This is the greatest sacrifice I bring.

SIXTH SCENE

[Change of scene, as rapid as before. The garden before the palace]

Channa (Ch.) enters with a horse.

Channa. My Prince, here is your steed!

Mara (M), a superhuman figure, gaudily dressed, hovering in the air, suddenly appears and addresses Siddhattha (B).

M. It is a shame to leave your wife and child.

B. [*Addressing the vision in the air.*]
Mara, thou here? thou wicked one, thou tempter!

K. Oh do not leave us Prince. Think of the wrong you do.
You wrong your royal father, you wrong your wife, you wrong your child.

B. What sayest thou? Thou sayest I do wrong?
The same rebuke is echoed in my heart;
It is so sweet, so loving, so alluring!
And shall I listen to its tender voice?
How pleasant would it be to stay at home,
And to enjoy my wife's love and my child's!
Is that my duty? Say, is that my duty?

K. Surely my Lord, your duties lie at home.

Siddhattha wavers as if in doubt. He stands pondering for a moment.

B. Who will instruct me where my duty lies?

M. I will instruct thee, I will guide thee right.

K. How can you doubt, my Prince? And can you not
Search for the truth here in this pleasant garden?
There're spots enough where you can think and ponder,

And meditate among the fragrant flowers.

B. Here I shall never reach my goal.

*K.*Stay here.
A kingdom is your sure inheritance,
While Buddahood is but a doubtful prize.

B. And shall the world wait for another Buddha?
So many millions clamor for the truth!

With determination.

I hear the call and naught shall hold me back.
I see my duty and I will obey.

M. Wilt thou not stay, my noble Prince Siddhattha?
The wheel of empire turns, and thee I shall
Make king of kings to rule the whole broad earth.
Think of the good which thou wilt do as king!
And then as king of kings thy mighty power
Will spread the good religion o'er the world.

B. I know thee Mara, tempter, Evil One,
Prince of this world, I know thy voice, thy meaning.
The gifts thou offerest are transient treasures,
And thy dominion is mere vanity.
I go to found a kingdom in the realm
Of the immortal state which lasts for aye.
Thou hinderest and dost not help the truth.

K. Thou speakest to the empty air, my Prince,
For I see no one whom thou thus addressest.

Channa helps Siddhattha to mount, and while the gate opens leads the horse out of the gate, and Kala enters into the palace. Visakha is coming to the front.

V. He is gone. He has made room for me. The time will come when this kingdom will be mine.

Y. [*from the balcony*] Siddhattha! Siddhattha! Where are you? He is

gone! He has departed into homelessness! [*She faints.*]

[CURTAIN]

FIRST INTERLUDE.

Living pictures accompanied by appropriate music, as an introduction to Act II.

1. Begging Food.

A scene of the Prince's life as a mendicant friar.

A Hindu village, Siddhattha stands bowl in hand before a hut; a woman dishes some rice from a kettle into his bowl; villagers, including children, stand around gazing at him,—a few with clasped hands.

2. The King Greets the Mendicant.

Tradition tells that King Bimbisara, hearing of the noble monk, went out to see him and offered him to take part in the government. This being refused, the King requested him to visit Rajagaha, the royal residence, as soon as Siddhattha had become a Buddha.

Siddhattha is seated under a tree near a brook; the king stands before him, surrounded by his retinue.

3 Preaching to the Villagers.

Under the tree in the market place of a Hindu village The Buddha is seated in the attitude of a preacher. The villagers stand or squat around intently listening.

4. Saved from Starvation

In company with other monks, Siddhattha sought for a while enlightenment by self-mortification.

Being exhausted by severe fasts, the mendicant faints, and Nanda, the shepherd's daughter, passing by, refreshes him with rice milk. His five disciples at a distance fear that he has given up his quest for truth.

ACT II.

FIRST SCENE

[Seven years have elapsed since the first act. A room in the royal palace at Magadha]

Present: Nagadeva (N), the prime minister, General Siha (GS), commander-in-chief of the Magadha forces. Later on the Master of Ceremonies (MC), King Bimbisara (Bb.), a trumpeter and a small body guard.

N. It is a joy to serve this mighty king
Whose power extendeth over many lands.
In peace he ruleth wisely, and his subjects
Obey him willingly for he is just.
In war he swoops upon his enemies
As doth a hawk upon a helpless chicken,
Quick in attack, lucky in every fight.
Indeed he earned his name deservedly,
The warlike Bimbisara.

GS. At his side
I fought with him in many a doubtful battle
With all the odds against us, but his daring,
Joined to a rare instinctive foresight
By which he could anticipate all dangers,
Would win the day and ne'er was he defeated!
In this our latest war he took great risks,
Might have been taken by his foes, and would
Have lost his liberty, his throne, his life;
But venturing much he won, and by exposing
His own high person in the brunt of battle
He stirred the courage of his followers
To do great deeds of valor.

Master of Ceremonies enters with a trumpeter.

MC. Noble lords,
Mis majesty, our royal lord, is coming
To meet you here in private council.

Trumpeter blows a signal.

GS. Hail the victorious, warlike Bimbisara!

Both kneel as the king enters preceded and followed by a small body guard.

Bb. Be greeted noble lords.

N. We wish you joy and the continuance of your good fortune.

Bb. I have a matter to bespeak with you,
Far-reaching weighty plans of great importance.
I wish to be alone with you.

Turning to the captain of his body guards.

Captain, have this room guarded by your soldiers.
The gong shall call you when I need your service.

The soldiers march out of the room.

Be seated, my good lords.
You helped me gain a wondrous victory
Which proves I have the favor of the gods.
I probed your skill, your courage and your faith
And found you both most able and most trusty.
Therefore you are to me much more than vassals
And servants of the state; you are my helpers,
Indeed my friends and nearest to my heart.
A king needs friends who share his secret thoughts,
Who stand by him in all vicissitudes,
Who bear with him responsibilities,
And above all, who frankly speak the truth.
I ask you, will you be such friends to me?

GS. I will with all my heart.

*N.*And I not less.

Bb. I, my dear friends, I promise you in turn
That I shall not resent your words of truth

If spoken in good faith with best intentions.
I may not always follow your advice,
But you are free to say whate'er you please,
Whate'er you may deem best for me to know,
Whate'er will benefit the empire and my people.
Now listen what I have to say to you.
I will reveal to you my inmost heart:
This is an age of greatest expectations;
Riches accumulate in our cities,
Commerce and trade are flourishing, and
Our caravans exchange our native goods
For gold and precious produce from abroad.
What India needs is unity of rule.
The valley of the holy Ganges should
Be governed by one king, a king of kings.
There should no longer be a rivalry,
A clash of interests between the states,
And all the princes should obey the rule
Of the one man who guides and guards the whole.
This therefore is my plan: you Nagadeva
Must gain the favor of our neighbor kings,
So as to make them recognize our sway.
If voluntarily they will submit,
They shall be welcome as our worthy vassals.
If they resist (*turning to Siha*) my gallant general
You must reduce them to subjection.
A treaty with the rajas in the east,
In southern and in northern Kosala,
Speedeth my plans, the Sakyas only
Defy our sovereign will, and keep aloof.
If they yield not, their power must be broken!
There is a task for you and for my army.

N. Permit, my noble king, that I advise you.
I know the Sakya minister of state,
And he is willing to betray his master.
The Sakya prince, the only son and heir,
Siddhattha Gotama he's called by name,
Went into homelessness and has turned monk,
Leaving behind his wife and a small son.

The minister aspireth to the throne,
And if we help him in his plans, he will
Acknowledge you as sovereign over him.
And that will save your army blood and trouble.

Bb. What is his name.

N. Visakha, noble King.

Bb. I wish to see him. Let him visit you
And as by accident I want to meet him.

GS. Allow me, mighty King, a word of warning.

Bb. Speak freely.

GS.

With unconcealed indignation, almost entreatingly.

Do not listen to a traitor.
Send me with all the army of the kingdom,
Bid me lead captive all the Sakyas; do it
In open fight but not by treachery.
My King, avoid alliance with Visakha,
His very breath contaminates. He lowers
Ourselves to his low level.

Bb. Thank you Siha.
I will be slow. [*Pondering*] But it is too important!

Argues with himself.

May I not listen to a traitor's words,
Nor hear him,—profit by his information?

GS. Oh do it not!

Bb. Siha, thou art a soldier.
I honor thee, thou speakest like a soldier,

But think how much diplomacy will help,
How many lives and property it saves.
Without the brutal means of war it will
Better accomplish all our ends; it spares
The enemy as well. A prosperous country
Will serve me better than a city sacked
And villages destroyed by fire.

GS. Pardon, my liege, I do not trust a traitor.

Bb. I will be on my guard, but I shall see him,
'T shall be by way of reconnoitering.
You in the meantime keep the army ready,
For one way or another I must conquer
The Sakya king and make him do my bidding.

The King rises indicating that his two counselors are dismissed. They rise also.

The world is growing wider every day
And our souls broaden with the general progress.
A new era dawns upon us. Let us all
Help to mature the fruitage of the times.

SECOND SCENE

[The garden before the palace of King SUDDHODANA as in Act I]

Presents Yasodhara (Y) with her maid Gopa (G) and Rahula (R).

Y. Repeat that verse once more and then we will stop our lesson.

R.

With goodness meet an evil deed,
With loving kindness conquer wrath,
With generosity quench greed,
And lies by walking on truth's path.

Y. Now you can run about in the garden or play with the Captain's son.

R. Mother, I do not believe that goodness always works in this life.

Y. Why do you think so?

R. Because there are very bad boys, so bad that only a whipping will cure them.

Y. Rahula!

R. Truly, mother, truly. Even the gardener says so.

Y. You must set the bad boys a good example.

R. No use, mother; they remain bad. I have tried it.

Y. You must have patience.

R. No use, mother; and the gardener says, A viper remains a viper.

Y. Even poisonous reptiles can be tamed.

R. Yes, but the gardener first pulls their fangs. Would you like me to play with a viper?

Y. No, my boy.

Excitement at the gate. Kala enters and soldiers of the guard surround him.

R. What is going on?—O Mother! Kala Udayin is back!

Kala Udayin (K) appears among the guards. Rahula runs to the gate.

R. Kala! Welcome home! Shake hands!

K. Be heartily greeted, my boy.

R. Did you see father?

K. I did, Rahula.

R. Tell me all.

K. I will tell mother.

R. Come to mother. She has been expecting you for many days.

Kala kneels to the Princess.

Y. Gopa, take his bundle. [*The maid takes his bundle and carries it into the house.*] What news do you bring of Prince Siddhattha?

K. I followed the Prince from place to place and saw him last near Benares in the forest of Uruvela.

Y. How is his health, and will he come back?

K. His health is probably good, but he does not think of coming back—not yet. O my dear lady! If you could see him! he is as thin as a skeleton. I could count all his ribs.

R. What is the trouble with father.

K. He is fasting. He lives on a hempcorn a day; think of it, one little hempcorn a day!

Y. Oh, he will die! My poor husband. I must follow him and attend to his wants. He needs his wife's loving care. I will leave my home and follow him.

K. Could you help him, princess? He might not like it, and the monks abhor women. Moreover, I was told that he takes food again, every morning a cup of rice milk. The day I left he looked better. Still, he was pretty pale.

Y. Tell me all you know of him.

K. I went first to Rajagaha, and there I heard wondrous tales about the noble monk Gotama. All the people knew about him, they called him a "sage" or "muni" and the "Bodhisatta."

R. What does that mean, Kala?

K. Bodhisatta is the man who seeks the bodhi—and the bodhi is enlightenment or Buddhahood.

Y. What did the people of Rajagaha say?

K. When Prince Siddhattha came to Rajagaha, he created a great excitement in the city. Never had been seen a mendicant of such noble appearance, and crowds flocked to him. They thought he was a Buddha and greeted him as a Buddha; but he said to them "I am not a Buddha; I am a Bodhisatta, I seek Buddhahood, and I am determined to find it."

Y. Did you meet people who saw him?

K. Indeed, I did. They say he looked like a god. The news spread all over the capital, and King Bimbisara himself went out with his ministers to see the Bodhisatta. King Bimbisara came to the place where the stranger stayed—under a forest tree near a brook—and greeted him most respectfully saying, "Great monk, remain here with me in Rajagaha; I see that you are wise and worthy. Live with me at the royal palace. Be my adviser and counselor. You are not made for a mendicant. Your hands are fit to hold the reins of empire. Stay here, I beg you, and you shall not lack honor and rank." "Nay," replied Siddhattha, "let me go my way in quest of enlightenment. I am bent on solving the problem of existence, and I will become a Buddha." Said the King, "Hear then, great monk. Go in quest of enlightenment, and when you have found it come back to Rajagaha."

Y. Is King Bimbisara so religious?

K. King Bimbisara is ambitious. As is well known, he is a warrior and a conqueror; but that is not all. He wants to be the greatest monarch of all ages and he would have all the great events happen under his rule. This is what he said to the Bodhisatta: "When I was a youth I uttered five wishes, and they were these: I prayed, May I be crowned King. This wish has been fulfilled. Then I wished, May the holy Buddha, the Blessed One, appear on earth while I am King, and may he come to my kingdom. This was my second wish, and while I gaze upon you I know that it will be fulfilled. Further I wished, May I see the blessed Buddha and pay my respects to him. This was my third wish. My fourth wish was, May the Blessed One preach the doctrine to me, and my fifth and greatest wish was this, May I understand the doctrine. I beg you, therefore, great monk, when you have become a Buddha come back and preach the doctrine to me and accept me as your disciple."

Y. And whither did Siddhattha go from Rajagaha?

K. He visited the great philosophers Arada and Udraka, but he found no satisfaction in their theories. So he went on to Uruvela where the ascetics live. I followed the Bodhisatta and learned that he stayed with five disciples in the forest. I found shelter near by in the cottage of the chief shepherd, a good old man with a pretty daughter, Nanda. There I watched Siddhattha and his disciples from a distance. He was the youngest but the wisest of them, and they reverenced him as master. He outdid them all in fasting. One day Nanda, the shepherd's daughter, saw him faint, and he might have died from exhaustion right on the spot if Nanda had not given him rice milk to drink.

Y. O good Kala, what shall I do? What shall I do? Here I sit at home, a poor, helpless woman, unable to assist him or to take care of him! O Kala, advise me, what can I do?

> *King Suddhodana (S) and Visakha (V) come out of the palace. The Princess retires into the palace. Gopa hides behind the bushes.*

S. I am glad to see you back. Have you seen my son?

K. I have sire.

S. Where did you find him?

K. At Uruvela, the place of mortification where saints try to see visions and reach a state of bliss.

V. And has Siddhattha succeeded?

K. It does not seem so; he is starving himself to death.

V. Is he dying?

K. Not exactly, but I do not see how he can live—on that diet.

S. Oh, Visakha, how have I been deprived of my son through a whim!

Both return into the palace. Visakha comes back.

V. It seems that Siddhattha is ruining himself.

K. At the rate he is going now, he won't stand it long. He may not live another month. It is pitiable. You should have seen him. That beautiful young man looks like a consumptive in his last stage. I did not dare to tell what I thought. The Princess would not have borne the sad news.

V. Too bad. It looks pretty hopeless.

K. I do not see how the Prince can survive.

V. What is the idea of these fasts?

K. These pious recluses believe that the self is imprisoned in the body and that the senses are the prison gates. They want to liberate the soul, and many of them behold visions, but Siddhattha seems to doubt whether the saints of Uruvela proceed on the right track. Indeed he denies the very existence of the self.

V. I know he does. His views should be branded as purely human wisdom. As the senses are finger touch, eye touch, ear touch, nose and tongue touch, so the mind is to him mere thought touch. He claimed that the mind originates through a co-operation of the senses.

K. His disciples begin to break away from him.

V. That is right. They ought to have done so long ago. I always said that Siddhattha is an unbeliever. He spurns faith and relies too

much on his own observation and reasoning. He will never find enlightenment. He is too negative, too nihilistic, and his quest of Buddhahood will end in a lamentable failure.

K. It would be a pity, sir. He is certainly in earnest to find the truth —the real truth, not what the priests say nor the Vedas declare, but the truth, provable truth.

V. Yes that is his fault. When the king speaks with you tell him all, explain the hopelessness of his situation. The king ought to know the facts.

Visakha retires into the palace.

K. [*Calls in a low voice*] Gopa, Gopa!

[*Gopa appears from behind the bush.*]

K. [*Aside*] I knew she would not be far.

G. What do you want?

K. I want to have a talk with you.

G. Well?

K. Let us set our marriage day.

G. I do not care to marry you—just yet.

K. I want a kiss, Gopa.

G. You shan't have it!

K. I will leave Kapilavatthu and go back to the Bodhisatta.

G. He will tell you that a youth must not kiss a girl.

K. That rule holds only for monks.

G. Go and turn monk. Then it applies to you.

K. The world would die out if everybody turned monk.

G. First, you are not everybody, and secondly, would it not be a blessing if the whole world would try to be sanctified?

K. Pshaw! Mankind consists of different castes and professions, of soldiers and merchants, of peasants and artisans and teachers. Mankind is like a body with various limbs, a head and hands, feet and chest and neck. A man who were head only could not live, and if mankind consisted of Buddhas only we would starve. We need a Buddha, but there must also be householders. Now quick give me a kiss.

She pouts.

K. If you do not kiss me I shall go back to the forest of Uruvela. Nanda, the shepherd's daughter, is a very pretty girl. She is as pretty as you are. She is,—well, her cheeks are rosier than yours. She is a little taller, and she is so graceful when she milks the kine. The shepherd needs a helper. I am sure he would like to have a son-in-law.

Rahula enters.

R. Gopa! Mother wants you.

G. [*Kisses K. quickly*] Here is a kiss, but you must forget Nanda. [*Runs away.*]

K. Stay a moment longer!

G. I have no time. [*Exit.*]

K. I knew she would come around,—and she is much prettier than Nanda. Nanda is a buxom country lass, a pleasant girl, but Gopa is as proper as a princess. [*He continues with unction.*] Bodhisatta longs for the blessed state of Nirvana, and when he has found it, he will be calm and without passion. He will walk on earth as a god among men. No emotion will disturb the peace of his mind, and the happiness of the great Brahma will be as nothing in comparison to the infinite bliss of his Buddhahood. [*With a lighter tone*]: I adore him, but I do not envy him. I do not long for the happiness of a god. I am a man with human faults and human yearnings. I am satisfied with the happiness and the sufferings of a man. Since I am assured of Gopa's love, I care not for Nirvana. I think that this world is good enough for me.

V. [*Looks around like a spy.*]

How peaceful lies this palace, yet I see
The war clouds lour upon its roofs.
The storm will break with sudden vehemence upon
These harmless unsuspecting people. Woe to them,
Their doom is certain. Desperate resistance
Succumbs before the overwhelming forces
Of Bimbisara.—And what will become
Of poor Yasodhara?—I like her well.
I might still save her from her people's ruin.
A princess, sweet and noble, and herself
Descended from an ancient royal house. But
I hate that little youngster Rahula.
Whate'er betide, my deep-laid schemes will speed
And I shall profit by my master's doom.

[Music: Chopin's Nocturno. Opus 37, No. 2.]

[CURTAIN]

THIRD SCENE.

[Darkness covers the scene. Distant thunder and lightning. Gradually it grows light again and the scene of YASODHARA'S bedroom becomes visible. All luxury has been removed; she sleeps on a mat on the floor, RAHULA in bed.]

R. Mother! Mother!

Y. Sleep my boy, it is almost midnight.

R. Take me up, Mother.

Yasodhara picks Rahula up.

R. Why do you sleep on the floor, Mother?

Y. Because father does so. Let me lay you down on your couch, you must sleep.

R. Tell me more of father.

Y. I will to-morrow.

R. Tell me now. Is father a king?

Y. No, my son. But he is going to found a kingdom.

R. Will he be king of it?

Y. I do not know, my boy, but his kingdom will not be like other kingdoms. It will be the kingdom of truth—a spiritual kingdom, a kingdom of righteousness.

R. Is father rich?

Y. He scorns riches.

R. Why does he?

Y. He seeks other riches, the riches of religion, of the mind, of spirit.

R. Did he find them?

Y. I believe he did.

R. He sends you news through Kala Udayin.

Y. No, Rahula, I send Kala Udayin out to watch him and when Kala comes back he tells me what he saw and heard. Kala does not speak to father.

R. Why does Kala not speak to father?

Y. Grandfather forbade him. When we sent out Devadatta and Ananda, they became attached to the life of a hermit. They joined father and did not come back; but Kala will not turn monk.

R. But this time he will speak to father.

Y. How do you know?

R. I heard grandfather bid him to.

Y. What did he bid him?

R. He bade Kala that he should tell father to visit us.

She can scarcely conceal her joy.

Y. You heard grandfather say so?

R. I did, mother; grandfather said that he became old, and before he died he wanted to see his son again.

Y. Why! did he really say so?

R. He did.

Y. Oh you darling son, then you will see him, too.

R. People say that he will be a Buddha.

Y. Yes, my son, some say he will be a Buddha and others doubt it.

R. Mother, what is a Buddha?

Y. A Buddha is a man who has found the truth.

R. How does a man find the truth?

Y. By enlightenment. He must find out the cause of evil.

R. Why must he find out the cause of evil?

Y. He teaches the people how to avoid evil.

R. Has father found the cause of evil?

Y. Kala Udayin says he has.

R. What is the cause of evil?

Y. Father says that selfishness is the cause of evil and selfishness comes from the belief in self.

R. Self?

Y. Yes, self! Man, as a rule, believes that he is a self.

R. What? A self?

Y. Yes, a being by himself, who lives only for himself, and the thought of self makes him selfish; and selfishness begets all evils.

R. [*with a childlike serious conviction*] I believe it, mother.

Y. Father says there is no self, that self is an illusion.

R. What does that mean?

Y. It means that we are not separate beings. I think a thought and speak it out and you hear it. I believe in that thought and so do you. Whose is it then, yours or mine?

R. It belongs to both.

Y. But where does the thought come from? If it is true it belongs to the truth, and it was true before I thought it.

R. Yes, mother.

Y. And if it was wrong, it is evil, and it was evil before we thought it.

R. Yes, mother.

Y. And so are all our thoughts, but almost everybody assumes that his self thinks these thoughts and invents them; and that is an illusion.

R. I see.

Y. [*to herself*] His eyes close. He is tired. [TO RAHULA] Now go to sleep again, Rahula, and dream of your father. I will sing you one of father's songs.

Yasodhara lays Rahula down in the high bed and sings:

By ourselves is evil done,
By ourselves we pain endure.
By ourselves we cease from wrong,
By ourselves become we pure.
No one saves us but ourselves,
No one can and no one may.

We ourselves must walk the path,
Buddhas merely teach the way.

The boy sleeps. Then Yasodhara herself lies down on the mat on the floor. Above her appears the vision of her dream. Under the Bodhi tree in a forest landscape Siddhattha sits. He is surrounded by a halo of light. Mara approaches to tempt him.

M. Thou art ahungered, worthy Sakyamuni,
Ahungered art thou from continued fasts,
And thou wilt starve unless thou take and eat.
I bring delicious food, take, eat and live.

B. I shall not eat until my quest be done.
Much better 'tis to die in glorious battle
Than flee and lead a coward's life, defeated.
I shall not eat, O Mara, take thee hence.

M. Wilt thou not listen to my good advice?

B. The tempter always calls his councils good,
But pleasures which he promises are evil.

M. I will not suffer thee to stay, Siddhattha,
And shall disturb thy daring quest of truth.

I'll split the Bodhi tree by lightning
And frighten thee away with rumbling thunder.

All is wrapped in darkness, except Siddhattha and the Bohdi tree. Thunder and lightning. After a while the noise abates. It grows light again. Mara's daughters appear.

M. Go forth my daughters, tempt the holy man,
And lure him from the seat of Buddahood.

Three graceful women, Mara's daughters, sing in a low enticing voice.

[Melody: The Mermaids' Song from Weber's Oberon.]

Sweetest on earth 'tis in pleasure to live,
Love thou must ask for, and love thou must give.
Pain we can soothe and assuage every smart,
Yea, we will grant thee the wish of thy heart.
Power bestow we, enjoyment and mirth,
Health and wealth also, and all that has worth.
Lo, of life's happiness naught shalt thou miss,
Satisfied longings are greatest of bliss.

While they sing they circle around the Bodhi tree and pose in graceful attitudes.

[Siddhattha does not mind Mara's daughters. They withdraw, and grotesque monsters appear in threatening attitudes, exhibiting a savage war dance, always approaching the tree and turning their weapons against the Sakyamuni, but as soon as they approach the halo they droop, unable to hurt him. Lotus flowers rain down. Sakyamuni raises his right hand. A flash of lightning and a sudden clap of thunder. The spook vanishes in darkness while the Buddha under the Bodhi tree alone remains visible in a halo of light. The forest landscape reappears in full light as before.]

B. The wheel of life turns round through birth and death,
Its twelve-linked chain of causes takes its start
In ignorance and ends in suffering.
The truth is found, the fourfold noble truth;

All life is sorrow, sorrow's cause is lust,
But from our sorrow we can escape
If we abandon lust and thought of self.
The eightfold noble path of righteousness
Delivers from all evil: it will bring
Sweet peace of mind and leadeth to Nirvana.

[With music accompaniment]

Through many births I sought in vain
The builder of this house of pain.
Now, builder, thee I plainly see!
This is the last abode for me.
Thy gable's yoke, thy rafters broke,
My heart has peace; all lust will cease.

[The following words fit exactly the music of Haydn's Chorus with Soli No. 13[B] in The Creation, and the spirit of the composition is very appropriate for this scene]

[B] Peters' Edition, pp 44-55 "Die Himmel erzahlen, etc." In a few places where the fugas set in, the words "The wicked Mara's host" should read "The wicked one's,—the wicked Mara's host," etc.

Chorus of Angels.

Behold the great muni,
His heart unmoved by hatred,
The wicked Mara's host
'Gainst him did not prevail.

Trio of Brahma Vishnu Shiva.

Victorious Buddha
Thou art wise and pure,

The darkness is gone
And enlightenment gained.

Chorus of Angels as above.

Proclaim the truth

To all the world.
Truth will bring salvation.
Glory to the truth!

Chorus of Angels as above.

[Lotus flowers rain down thicker and thicker, clouds cover the scene, but the Buddha under the Bodhi tree remains still dimly but sufficiently visible.]

Yasodhara wakes up. She rises and lights a candle from a rush lamp. She kneels with clasped hands before the vision of the Buddha.

Y. Oh Siddhattha, my Lord and Husband, no longer my Husband, but the Buddha. In thee I take my refuge. In thee and thy word, I believe. Thy doctrine shall guide me. Accept me as thy faithful disciple, a disciple of the Buddha, my Lord, the Tathagata, the great thinker, the Saviour of mankind.

[CURTAIN.]

SECOND INTERLUDE.

Living pictures accompanied by appropriate music to introduce the Third Act.

1. THE FOUNDATION OF THE KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Buddha preaches to his five disciples the way of salvation, which speech, preserved in a special book, is frequently compared to Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

Buddha stands with raised hand, while five monks stand or sit or squat around him in devout attitude.

2. ENTERING THE CAPITAL.

When Buddha came to Rajagaha, the people met him on the way and accompanied him into the city in triumphal procession which is analogous to Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

The Buddha with bowl in one hand and staff in the other is followed by yellow-robed monks. The people strew flowers, carry palm branches and wave kerchiefs.

3. THE COURTESAN.

Ambapali, the Buddhist Mary Magdalen, came to Buddha, worshiping him and invited him to take his meal at her home. To the astonishment of several moralists, he accepted and honored the penitent sinner.

A beautifully dressed woman with clasped hands kneels before Buddha, a maid in attendance behind her. Some well dressed people of high caste watch the scene with an expression of indignation.

4. THE PHILANTHROPIST.

The wealthiest man of Savatthi invites the Buddha to his home and offers to build a resthouse for the Buddha and his brotherhood.

Anatha Pindika kneels before the Buddha, holding in one hand the picture and plan of a building. Buddha indicates by his lowered hand acceptance of the gift. Buddha attended by two monks,

Anatha Pindika accompanied by the architect.

5. PRINCE JETA.

It is told that the most beautiful spot in Savatthi was the royal park of Prince Jeta, which Anatha Pindika wanted to buy for the brotherhood of Buddha. The owner was unwilling to sell and made the exorbitant demand to have the whole ground covered with gold as its price. But Anatha Pindika had the gold carried to the garden and paid the price.

The scene is laid in the garden. Anatha Pindika with bags of gold stands in commanding attitude. His servants spread the coins while Prince Jeta throws up his hands in astonishment.

(Anatha Pindika is not the real name of the founder of the Jetavana. The name means, "[He who gives to] the indigent, alms.")

ACT III.

FIRST SCENE

[A Brahman temple with a statue of Durga; before the idol an altar. In the background a landscape with farms and a sheep-fold.]

Enter from the right General Siha (GS.) with a Captain (C) and some soldiers.

GS. Pitch the tents on the slope of yonder hill where that farmhouse stands.

C. It shall be done, my general.

GS. What crowd is gathered there with flags and flowers?

C. It is the farmer's family led by the village priest, and neighbors flock around to swell their number.

GS. The priest handles a big knife that flashes in the sun. I see his hands are stained with gore. They seem to celebrate a feast in honor of a god.

C. The villagers inform me that the occasion of it is sad. One of the farmer's children died of late, and others being sick the father invokes the goddess Kali to preserve the rest of his family. They are arrayed for a procession and having offered a young sheep at the altar of the homestead they have started out. See how the crowd are wending their way hither to the temple.

General Siha looks around and contemplates the scenery, then turns to the Captain.

GS. Now pitch the tents before the sun goes down.

In the meantime, the Buddha enters with two disciples. They sit down under a tree. The ***Captain*** *bows to them reverently and leaves the stage.*

GS. Greetings to you, holy monks.

B. Peace be with thee, and may thy sword ne'er reek with blood.

GS. I draw the sword for my king, for my country and for the

restoration of order where enemies or rebels have disturbed it.

B. Thou lookst courageous and thy very words
Possess a ring of simple honesty.

GS. I serve a mighty king who means to do the right. He prefers to establish his rule by treaty and spares an enemy who sues for peace.

B. Thou speakst of Bimbisara, King of Magadha?

GS. Indeed I speak of the great Bimbisara, and he is born to sway the world. My sympathy and my allegiance go with him. I am Siha, his general.

B. Thy name is known throughout the Indian lands.

GS. When I chose my profession I prayed to the gods that they would never let it be my lot to fight for any unjust cause.

B. Let this thy prayer be a sacred vow
Which thou wilt keep inviolate. Our fate,
Or say the gods, create conditions; but thou
Thyself must act. Thou art responsible,
Thou shapest thine own life, and not the gods.

GS. Thy words please me! What is thy doctrine, venerable monk?

B. I teach the middle way between extremes.
Neither mortifications of the body
Nor self-indulgence should be practised.
We must make up our minds and walk
On the eightfold noble path of righteousness.

GS. Who art thou, wondrous monk? Thy doctrine is so plain, and so convincing that I grant thou speakest truth. The people ought to know thee and accept thy creed. Who art thou?

B. Born of the Sakya race, they call me Sakyamuni.

GS. Blessed be this day on which I meet the greatest man of our age. I heard of thee from the Nirgranthas, thine own enemies, the rival sect of thy new order, and they say that thou deniest the soul, thou teachest extinction, thou leadest man to non-existence, and that Nirvana is with thee an empty naught—annihilation.—Is that

true?

B. I teach extinction, noble general,
Of hatred, greed, and lust, but I insist
On doing what is right and just and good;
On doing resolutely what we do,
On searching for the truth, on setting up
Its lamp and following its holy light.
Nirvana is attained when passions are
Extinct and when the heart is blessed with peace.

GS. Thou art more than a mortal, holy man. Auspicious is this day on which I've met thee. The people call thee Buddha, perhaps rightly so! A feeling of deep reverence comes over me and the truth dawns on me. Truly thou art the teacher of the world. If thy doctrine impressed the people a new era would begin, an era in which mankind would be wiser and nobler, happier and better.

[Barbaric music is heard behind the stage, the drum being prominent.]

Voices behind the stage: Maha Kali! Kali Ma!

GS. Behold how wretched are these people in their ignorance.

B. They must be taught and they will learn the truth.

[The procession enters. A small band of musicians comes with primitive instruments, among them drums. They are followed first by dancers, then by a priest (*Pr.*) flourishing in his bloody hand a large knife. By his side walks a shepherd carrying a lamb. Behind them the farmer's (*F.*) family and other people]

GS. What horrible sounds! And the crowd behave like madmen.

Pr. Maha Kali!

Crowd. Kali Ma!

Pr. Goddess of the black countenance! Great Black Mother!

Crowd. Maha Kali! Kali Ma!
Maha Kali! Kali Ma!
Maha Kali! Kali Ma!

[The priest steps to the altar; the crowd kneels in a large circle. At the priest's signal the farmer approaches the altar and kneels. His behavior betrays superstitious timidity and great awkwardness. The shepherd exhibits the lamb first to the priest and then to the dancers who in fantastic dancing step advance and retreat while the music plays. Finally the lamb is placed on the altar.]

Pr. Have Mercy on us! Slay the demon of disease.
Keep away Yama the horrible one, the god of Death.

Crowd. Kali Ma, have mercy on us!

Pr. Thou art Parvati, the wife of Siva. Thou hast conquered the giant Durga, the evil one, and now thyself art called the goddess Durga.
Thou art Mahishamardini, the slayer of Mahisha.
Thou art Kalaratri, Nightly Darkness, abyss of all mysteries.
Thou art Jagaddhatri, mother of the world.
Thou art Jagadgauri, renowned throughout the world.
Thou art Katyayina, refulgent with a thousand suns.
Thou art Singhavahini, seated on a lion thou wonest victory over Raktavija, leader of the giants' army.
Great Mother of Life, accept our offering, the blood of this lamb.

Crowd. Maha Kali, accept our offering!
Kali Ma, accept our offering!
Kali Durga, great Goddess, accept our offering!

The priest turns toward the lamb and raises his knife. Buddha steps to the altar and places his hand gently upon the priest's arm.

B. Hold!

Pr. Meddler!

B. Pause before thou sheddest blood.

Pr. How dar'st thou rudely interfere, strange monk,
With our most sacred sacrifice? This lamb
Is offered to the goddess. Thou disturbest
Our holy ritual.

He lifts his knife against Buddha, but Siha draws his sword and knocks the knife out of the priest's hand.

GS. Keep peace, bold priest!

Pr. The vengeance of the gods will be upon you.

B. If there be gods they must be potent, noble,
And great and holy; and if the gods are holy,
They do not need the offering of a victim,
They do not want the life of this poor trembling lamb.

Pr. The gods are kind; they take the lamb in place of this poor stricken man. We must do penance for his sins, for the sins of his wife, for the sins of his children.

Farmer. I crave forgiveness for the sins for which my dear good child has had to die.

Pr. His sins are great and nothing can wash them away but blood.

B. Herein thou errest, priest. Blood does not cleanse.
It washes not away the stain of sin;
The slaughter of a victim heaps but guilt
On guilt, and does not right a wrong. Rise,
Rise, my good friend. Take comfort!

The farmer rises.

Be a man.

The others rise gradually.

F. What shall I do, good master?

B. Right all the wrongs thou didst and sin no more.

Pr. This lamb was given to the goddess. It is mine.

GS. Are you the steward of the goddess' property?

Siha steps close to the priest who retires step by step and finally hurries off the stage.

Come, shepherd, take the frightened lambkin up

And bear it to its mother in the fold.

[The shepherd takes up the lamb and stands ready to carry it away. The musicians slink away. The lambbearers and the people walk off in procession, followed by the Buddha with his disciples. General Siha remains alone on the stage. A trumpet call at a short distance and another one close by.]

GS. What does that signal mean?

An officer accompanied by a trumpeter enters. A third trumpet call on the stage. The officer delivers a letter.

Officer. A dispatch from his majesty Bimbisara to his faithful and most noble general, Siha.

GS. Breaks the seal and reads to himself.

"The Sakyas are a stubborn little nation. Their institutions are free; their laws differ from those of the other surrounding states. These people are a source of discontent and revolution, and are a sore in my eye. Therefore, the Sakyas must be crushed, even if they sue for peace. Keep the army near the border and be ready for a sudden attack."

With an expression of grief.

War is unavoidable and I am to be the means by which the Sakyas will be wiped off the earth. It is my duty, for the King commands it. A soldier should not argue, he obeys.

Draws his sword and looks at it.

This sword is consecrated to the service of my king.
Never have I drawn it except in honest fight.

Lost in contemplation.

Is Sakyamuni the Buddha?—Is he truly the Buddha?
Buddhas are wise; Buddhas are omniscient; Buddhas foresee the future.—
Is Sakyamuni truly the Buddha?—I believe he is.
And if he is the Buddha, is it right to wage a war against his people?—What shall I do?

Oh, ye gods, teach me my duty!
Oh, ye gods, may it not be my lot to fight for an unrighteous cause!
Cursed be the sword that sheds innocent blood.

SECOND SCENE.

[Bimbisara's court at Rajagaha]

Present: King Bimbisara (Bb.), Visakha (V), and Nagadeva (N).

V. The Sakyas will make a hard fight, great King, and the war will cost blood. These northern settlers are taller and stronger than other races and possess the courage of the inhabitants of their former frigid homes. It would be easier to take possession of their state if I married Princess Yasodhara and gradually assumed the government under your protection. Your mighty friendship would support me on the throne and you could rule through me.

Bb. That sounds acceptable, but in the meantime, I prepare for war.

V. Even in war I shall be of service to you. I can lead your army where it will not meet with resistance, and I know the names of those who are dissatisfied. Many could be induced to join your forces; and I can betray the very person of the raja into your hands.

Bb. Nodding kindly to Visakha, then turning to Nagadeva.

Is our kingdom in readiness?

N. Great King, it is. General Siha stands in the field with a strong force ready to strike. There are another fifty thousand within call to make a sudden dash upon any of our neighbors should they dare come to the aid of Sakya. Our treasury is well filled, and the people of Magadha are prosperous. We could stand even a protracted war far better than any other state in India.

Bb. The time seems favorable; the risk is small, and the spoil will be great. Convene my generals in the assembly hall.

They bow low and pass out. Ambapali (Ap.) enters.

Ap. Are they gone, my Lord, and what did you decide?

Bb. I propose to go to war.

Ap. You are rightly called "the Warlike."

Bb. I want to round off my kingdom and expand my power northward until it reaches the Himalayas.

Ap. The gods will speed you and the blessings of the saints shall be upon your people.

Servant enters.

St. There is a holy man who wants to see your Highness. His name is Devadatta.

Bb. Show him in.

Servant exit.

Ap. Is he not one of the disciples of the Buddha?

Bb. I believe he is.

Ambapali retires.

Devadatta enters.

Dd. Hail, great King! Protector of religion and victor of many battles!

Bb. What brings you to my presence? I always rejoice to see holy men. Their coming is auspicious, and I am happy to be of service to them.

Dd. Great King, I implore your assistance for the brotherhood which I have founded. We need your royal support and the holiness of our lives will surround you as a halo with heavenly protection.

Bb. Are you not a disciple of Gotama, who is called the Buddha?

Dd. No longer, mighty King, I was his disciple so long as I believed in him; but he is not holy. I have abandoned him. He is not austere; his disciples do not practise self-mortifications, and he speaks kindly and dines with sinners. My disciples do not dress in worldly garments; they would not accept the invitation of women; they would not touch animal food. He who calls himself the Buddha is unworthy of that high title; he is a pretender who has not reached the highest goal. My rules are much more strict than his, and my brotherhood alone is holy.

Bb. Holiness is a mighty thing.

Dd. Yea, and our vows will shield your government, your throne, your army and your people against any misfortune.

Bb. I shall send my treasurer to investigate and will do what is right.

Dd. Maharaja, be assured of my deepest gratitude.

Bows low, exit.

Ap. [*re-enters, excited*] My royal friend, do not trust that man [*pointing toward the door where Devadatta went out*]. He is false. He may be holy, but he is treacherous. He may be virtuous; he may shun joy and the blessings of life, he may practise all penances, he may torture and mortify his body. But there is no true goodwill in him. His holiness is egotistic, and his religion is hypocrisy. Support his brotherhood with money or gifts as you see fit, but do not believe what he says about the Buddha.

Bb. [*With an inquiring look*] Why?

Ap. I know what he meant when he scoffed at him. When the Buddha stayed at Vesali, I invited that noblest of all monks to take his meal with me. I am not holy; I am a worldly woman; I am not a saint; but I have a warm heart, I feel for others and I want to do what is right. When I heard that the Buddha stayed in the mango grove, I thought to myself, I will go and see him. If he is truly all-wise, he will judge my heart and he will judge me in mercy. He will know my needs and will not refuse me. I went to the mango grove and he looked upon me with compassion; he accepted my invitation in the presence of witnesses, openly, fearlessly, and in kindness. There were the proud Licchavi princes, and close to him stood the envious Devadatta. How they scowled; how they condemned the great and kindly saint! How they whispered, "Shame on him!" and I saw how they despised me—yet they did not dare to speak out or to censure him publicly. Then, my gracious King, I knew that he was truly the Lord Buddha, the Allwise.

Bb. My dear friend, I accept every word you say as true. I know the goodness of your heart, I know your worth, your loving kindness, and if you were of royal birth you would be worthy to wear a

crown. The Buddha did not demean himself when he honored you.

Ap. Allow me one question. Did the Buddha ever beg you to support his brotherhood?

Bb. No, he did not; but I will give him all the assistance he may need.

Ap. Did he ever offer you the support of his vows, or did he ever praise the efficacy of his holiness?

Bb. He never did.

Ap. Neither does he stand in need of self-recommendation, for his very presence is a blessing, because he spreads goodwill and kindliness, and the people who hear him are ashamed of doing anything unrighteous. Devadatta extends to you the promise, if you but support his disciples, of an unconditional protection through his holiness. The Buddha's protection is not so cheaply earned. I heard him say that every one must protect himself by his own righteousness, and no prayer, no sacrifice, no religious devotion, nor even penance or fasts could protect a man from the wrongs which he does.

Bb. The Buddha's presence would be more auspicious than ten Devadattas.

Ap. Oh, most assuredly! And what a contempt I have for the virtuous indignation of men who, overmoral themselves, judge haughtily of others; yet, if you look into their souls you discover that they are heartless and self-seeking villains.

Bb. Your judgment is well grounded.

Ap. The Buddha alone possesses greatness, and the Buddha does not seek honor, but the people adore him.

Bb. Rajagaha must become the center of India. I will send for the Buddha and invite him to visit me. His sojourn here will make the kingdom of Magadha more famous than conquests and victories.

The servant enters.

St. Mighty King, the prime minister Nagadeva.

Bb. He is welcome. Fare thee well, sweet heart; affairs of state call me.

N. Mighty King, the generals are assembled. They hail thee as their war lord, and are anxious for laurels, for glory, for booty!

[TRUMPETS, CURTAIN.]

THIRD INTERLUDE.

Living pictures accompanied by appropriate music.

1. SENDING OUT THE DISCIPLES.

The Buddha called his disciples together, and having ordained them, bade them spread the Gospel, with these words translated from the Buddhist Canon:

"Go ye now, O disciples, and wander forth for the benefit of the many, for the welfare of mankind, out of compassion for the world. Preach the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, and glorious in the end, in the spirit as well as in the letter. There are beings whose eyes are scarcely covered with dust, but if the doctrine is not preached to them they cannot attain salvation. Proclaim to them a life of holiness. They will understand the doctrine and accept it."

The Pali expression *kalyamo dhamma* is here translated "glorious doctrine." The dictionary defines the first word as "excellent, beautiful, glorious." This closely corresponds to the Christian term, which, as derived from the Greek, reads "evangel" and in its Saxon equivalent "gospel" or "good tidings."

2. THE RICH YOUTH.

Yasa, the son of a wealthy nobleman of Benares, came by night to the Blessed One and exclaimed: "What misery!" But the Buddha answered, "There is no misery for him who has entered the Path."

Yasa, richly dressed, with an expression of distress, before the Buddha who comforts him. The scene is framed in darkness, the two figures being lit up by a torch.

3. A CHILD'S OFFERING.

Old frescoes in the Ajanta Caves show a mother sending a gift through her child. It looks as if they were Buddhist illustrations of Christ's injunction, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

ACT IV.

FIRST SCENE

[A room in the Jetavana. The wheel of the law pictured on one side and the wheel of becoming on the other. Otherwise swastikas and lotus flowers serve as ornaments. A large opening exhibits a view into a garden with running water. On the right side there is a platform with low seats, on the other there is a low table with a divan, on which Anatha Pindika is seated, looking over palmleaf manuscripts.]

Present: Anatha Pindika (A); Servant (St.); Prince Jeta (J); later on Kala Udayin (K) and the Buddha (B).

A servant enters.

St. His Highness the Prince Jeta.

A. Show him in.

Jeta enters. A. rises to meet him with bows.

You are most welcome, my Prince.

J. I have come from my brother, the King, to express to you his thanks for having bought my pleasure grounds for the noble and great purpose of affording a worthy resthouse to the Buddha and his brotherhood.

A. Kindly tender my gratitude to your royal brother for his gracious message.

J. I hear that King Bimbisara has sent an embassy to the Buddha to induce him to come back to Rajagaha. Has the Buddha received these men?

A. Not yet. He will see them this morning.

J. We ought to keep him here. He is a wonderful man, and I consider our city fortunate to have him reside with us. What astonishes me is his way of conquering the hearts of all men, even of his opponents, and he is so sensible.

A. What do you mean?

J. I am not a religious man; I am too worldly, but him I would follow.

A. Why?

J. He is perhaps the only religious reformer who does not go to extremes. He rejects on the one hand austerities, self-mortifications, penances, and severe fasts as useless, and on the other hand, he would not allow his followers to indulge in pleasures; but he insists most sensibly on keeping between the two extremes and proclaims the middle path of leading a righteous life. There is nothing absurd about him. Think of Devadatta. He insists that the monks should dress in rags picked up in cemeteries. The Buddha appeals to common sense, and therefore I say, he is a wonderful man.

A. He is more than a man; he is enlightenment incarnate.

A stream of blessings goes out from him.

J. He has grown into an international power, and kings do well not to ignore his influence.

A. I think so myself, and I am so glad that his influence is always for good, never for evil, and his ways are so marvelously gentle.

J. Indeed that is a blessing. If he were not so absolutely indifferent to his own affairs he might become positively dangerous. His lay disciples count in thousands of thousands. The farmers in the country, the merchants in the towns, the lawyers, the artisans, and even the soldiers believe in him. Lately General Siha became a lay member of the Buddha's brotherhood, and many other prominent officers followed his example.

A. He would never have gained this influence if he were not truly the Buddha.

J. I want to tell you that a war is threatening, but please do not speak of it, it is a deep secret. A spy in the secret service of my royal brother has found out that King Bimbisara intends to fall upon the Sakyas and deprive them of their independence. The Brahman Visakha, minister of state, has turned traitor and promises to deliver his country into the hands of King Bimbisara on the condition that he be made Raja in Suddhodana's place.

A. The country of the Sakyas is but small, and their independence will not last long; it is a mere question of time.

J. But consider that the Buddha hails from Kapilavatthu. He is the son of Suddhodana, the Sakya raja.

A. Indeed he is and may I be permitted to inform him of the danger that threatens his father's house?

J. I give you full liberty, for he will use discretion and not betray his informant. I deem Bimbisara's plan dangerous to himself. A war with the Sakyas may cost Bimbisara his throne, for the people of Rajagaha believe in the Buddha, and I learn that even now the war rumors have made them restless.

Servant (St.) enters.

St. Here is a man with the name Kala Udayin, who has a message for the Blessed One.

A. Show him in.

J. I leave you now and hope that you will keep the Buddha as long as possible in Savatthi.

Exit.

Kala Udayin enters and bows to Anatha Pindika.

A. You want to see the Blessed One? I will call him.

Anatha Pindika exit.

K. [*Alone*] This is the place where Prince Siddhattha lives! Indeed a most delightful spot and more pleasant than many a royal palace. And how the people speak of him! They call him the Blessed One, the Buddha, the Tathagata, the Sakyamuni, the great Sage. The wealthiest man of Kosala has bought these extensive and most beautiful grounds and presented them to the brotherhood of his disciples, so that the Buddha would stay here from time to time, and that the people of the city would have him for their guest.

Buddha accompanied by Anatha Pindika comes in. He is followed by two disciples. The Buddha sits down on the seat on the platform, having on either hand one of his disciples.

Anatha Pindika stands below with clasped hands.

Kala Udayin sinks to his knees with clasped hands.

B. My friend, what brings you here?

K. A message from your royal father: He bade me tell you that he is growing old, and before he dies, he wants to see his son once more. Would you deign to accept his invitation?

B. Tell me, my friend, how is my father? Is old age truly telling on him?

K. Not yet so visibly, but he worries much.

B. And how is Rahula? He is now seven years old and must be quite a boy.

K. He is, my Lord; and how he talks of his father. He knows everything you are doing.

B. Who tells him?

K. His mother does.

B. And tell me how the princess fares?

K. She imposes upon herself the observances which the mendicant friars keep. She will have no preference over him who once was her husband. She sleeps on the floor, she does no longer use unguents or perfumes. She wears a simple yellow robe and observes the regulation of the brotherhood in taking food.

The Buddha nods and with a distant look sits a few moments in silence.

B. And she is a good mother?

K. There could be no better.

St. [*announces*] An embassy of the most potent King of Magadha, the great Bimbisara.

B. [*Addressing himself to the servant*] Let them come in, [*turning to K.*] Kala Udayin, bring my father greetings, and say that I shall come.

Kala Udayin exit.

A number of men, the embassy of King Bimbisara, led by Nagadeva, most gorgeously dressed, file in. They let themselves down on one knee, clasp their hands and rise again.

N. Most gracious Lord, all-wise and blessed Buddha,
Our noble sov'reign bids me tender you
His most respectful greetings, and he hopes
That you return and visit Rajagaha,
For he is very anxious to be honored
By your auspicious presence in his kingdom.

B. My Lords, express to your most mighty King
That the Tathagata can not accept
This friendly invitation, for he will
Start for his home, the country of the Sakyas,
To see his aged father and his kin.
If war or other ills befall his people,
He wants to live, if need be, die with them.

N. Lord Buddha, speak a word of truth to us,
For I'm aware thou art omniscient.
Our royal master wants to hear from thee.

B. All bodily existence passeth by
For it is compound and will be dissolved;
But there is Law; it is the Uncreate,
It is th' Etern, which is without beginning
And without end. That must our refuge be.
He who relies on the Impermanent,
And, being strong, attempts to crush the weak,
Will soon break down. This is the law of deeds,
For as we sow, such will our harvest be.
Rely on Truth, the Uncreate, th' Etern,
Be guided by the rule of Righteousness.
This is my message to the King, your Lord,
And may he be advised to rule his country
With love of peace, with goodness, and with wisdom.
My blessing be on him and on his people.

They kneel, clasp their hands, circumambulate the Buddha and file out.

Jeta returns in excitement.

J. The war is on! King Bimbisara's army
Is building bridges to attack the Sakyas.

[CURTAIN. Trumpet signals, military music.]

FOURTH INTERLUDE.

Living Pictures Accompanied by Appropriate Music.

1. KING BIMBISARA ON THE ROYAL ELEPHANT.

The king is seated under a canopy, together with his minister and field marshal. On the head of the elephant, the driver; and retinue on either side.

2. THE WANDERER.

The Buddha was in the habit of wandering through the country from place to place.

The picture shows him with a staff in his right hand and a bowl in his left in an Indian landscape.

3. KING BIMBISARA IN CAMP.

Standing before the royal tent he addresses his generals.

ACT V.

FIRST SCENE.

[Reception hall of the Raja Suddhodana; Indian pompous style; columns and beyond an outlook into a tropical palm-garden. Seats scattered through the room. On the left a compartment, open toward the audience, is separated from the main room by hanging carpets.]

Near the right side Suddhodana is seated with Pajapati and Yasodhara. Rahula in the background (viz., in the garden) in the care of a nurse.

S. The time is troublesome, and it appears that war is imminent.

P. Oh do not fret;
Visakha is a cunning diplomat:
I hope he'll be successful, and he will
Persuade King Bimbisara to keep peace.

S. I do hope too, but hope against conviction.

Visakha and Devala enter.

There come the Brahman and the gallant Captain.

V. [Kneeling on one foot to the King] Hail Maharaja!

D. Hail, my gracious King.

S. Welcome my worthy messengers!

They kneel to Pajapati.

P. Be welcome.

S. Tell me at once, how did your mission speed?

V. There is a subtle influence against you
At Bimbisara's court; there is a party
Bound to have war, and they will have it too,

Unless we meet them by diplomacy.
Leave it to me, and I'll preserve the peace.

S. Had not my son turned mendicant, how useful
Could he at present be! I need a general,
A trusty man of youthful strength and courage
To take the helm and lead the ship of state
Through storm and danger, for our foes are strong.

V. Great Raja, I am privy to your grief,
I know the hope you'd set upon Siddhattha.
What brilliant gifts the boy inherited,
From you, his royal father, and how he,
Forgetful of his filial duty, left you,
And his fair wife and child, to turn a beggar.

S. All this is true, remind me not of it,
'Tis a disgrace to our most royal house,
And all the Rajas in the Indian land,
Will point to us and mock the Sakya tribe.

Rahula comes in with childlike joy and brings his mother a rose.

R. Here, mother, is a rose. I picked it from the bush where the nightingale sings. I thought, if father had been here, he would have brought the rose to you. He loves the flowers and so do you.

Y. My darling!

S. [*with a touch of anger*] Yasodhara, I wish you would not speak to him too much of his father.

R. Why should mother not mention father? I love him and I should know all about him. I want to join the Buddha's brotherhood.

S. Do you love him more than your grandfather?

R. I love my grandfather too, I love mother, and you, dear grandmother [*turning to Pajapati*]. You are always so kind to me. I love you all. But father I love in a different manner. I love him as Buddha. I clasp my hands to him as to a god; and so do you mother,

do you not?

Y. [*Puts her hand on Rahula's mouth*] Hush! I thank you for the rose, my child; now run away and bring another rose to grandfather, and one for your grandmother Pajapati.

R. Yes mother, and one I keep for father when he comes.

Runs off.

V. Your grandson needs a father, Maha Raja!
And let me tender you my humble service.
I see Yasodhara, the noble princess,
Pine patiently away and spend in mourning
Her life's best years of youth and happiness.
She has been cruelly deserted, has
Been widowed by Siddhattha for a whim.
Give her to me in marriage, and I'll prove
A better father than that runaway,
A better father to your little grandson,
A better husband to his widowed wife.

S. You are at liberty to ask my daughter.

V. Fair Princess, cease to mourn, and grant my suit.
Thou shalt see better days than heretofore.

Y. I pledged my troth to Gotama Siddhattha,
And I shall never break my faith to him.

V. Siddhattha is no more, he has turned monk
And you are free, you are Siddhattha's widow.

S. My daughter, do not think that I oppose
Visakha's suit, for on the contrary
I do support it, and I wish you would
Accept him as a husband, for I need
Alliance with a brave and trusty man.

V. Princess Yasodhara, here is my hand,

Do not refuse me.

Y. Brahman, spare your words.

V. The time will come when you will sore regret.
O King, compel her to obey; make use
Of your good right as master of this house,
For I alone can save the Sakya state.

P. O worthy Brahman, do not threaten us.

V. Decide, O Maharaja; thou art Lord!
Thy bidding must be done. Shall women rule,
Or art thou master still in thine own home?

S. I am master here; but not a tyrant;
Among our people master means a leader.
The Sakya yeomen justly pride themselves
On their free institutions. I'm the first
Among them, not an autocrat nor despot;
I serve them as adviser, guide and father;
Shall I who never would infringe upon
The right of any poorest peasant woman,
Compel a princess of the royal house
To marry 'gainst her will? No sir, not I.
I wished the Princess to accept your suit,
But I shall never say, She must be yours.

V. King of the Sakyas, you forget yourself,
I am a Brahman and of noble birth.
I served you faithfully for many years,
But now I quit your service, for I know
That Bimbisara, King of Magadha,
The mightiest of Indian rulers,
Will welcome me as friend and counselor.

He bows to the King and Pajapati, and leaves. For a moment they are all silent.

S. I fear me that means war.

D. Indeed it does.

If you remember, King, Visakha said
There was a subtle influence against you
At Bimbisara's court. It dawns on me
That he, Visakha, is the cause of it.
I saw him whisper with a courtier, then
He spoke in secret with a general,
And with the King too he was closeted.
The hypocrite has thrown away his mask,
And since he spoke out boldly, I know now
That he has been intriguing all the time.

S. He thinks I hate my son, but I do not.
I'm only angry, I am disappointed,
Because he did not heed my dearest wish.
I love him still and I invited him
To visit his old home and me, his father.
I sent Udayin with a kindly greeting.
Oh, I'd forgive him all, and e'en his flight,
Had only he not turned a mendicant.
It hurts my pride to see a Sakya prince,
And mine own son, go round from house to house
With bowl in hand to beg his daily food.

Rahula comes in excited.

R. Grandfather, here is your rose, and grandma, here is yours. And oh! did you hear the news?

Y. What is it, boy? Why are you so excited?

P. Who told you any news?

R. The guards at the gate. They say that my father has come. All the people rush out of their houses and greet him with clasped hands. They strew flowers on the road and hail him as the Buddha!

Y. [*rises*] Why, is it possible?

Wants to retire.

S. Stay here. Kala Udayin comes.

Kala enter and kneels.

K. I bow in humble reverence before the King. And my respectful salutations to all the members of the royal house [*turning to Gopa*] and to you.

S. Bring you good news, Udayin?

K. Your noble son, my King, is coming.

S. Where did you find him?

K. At the Jetavana at Savatthi.

S. What kind of a place is that?

K. It is the most wonderful pleasure park I ever saw. O King, your garden here is a paltry affair in comparison with the Jetavana.

S. There he lives in luxury?

K. Oh no Sir. Not at all. He could live in luxury, if he wanted to, but he leads a simple life, as simple as the humblest servant in your home, and when he wanders through the country after the rainy season he lives like any mendicant friar. He overtook me on my way, and when he came hither to Kapilavatthu, his home, he did as usual. Last night he slept in the forest, and this morning he went from house to house with bowl in hand, begging his food, and he spoke a blessing wherever people greeted him kindly, or gave him to eat.

S. Oh my son, my son! Why didst thou not go straight to the palace where thy father has food enough for thee and all thy disciples!

K. He always follows the rule of the mendicants.

S. Oh my son! Why dost thou shame thy father in his own home?

K. The Blessed One deems it no shame to beg. He is as modest as a pauper and shows no pride, but wherever he comes, he is greeted

like a king, nay like a king of kings, and the wealthiest and most powerful rulers come to do him reverence.

S. And he is here, this wonderful man? And he is my son Siddhattha?

K. Yes, he is here, and it is your son, but no longer Siddhattha, the Sakya prince, but Sakya muni, the sage of the Sakyas, the Buddha, the Blessed One. When I spoke to him and gave him your message, he inquired for you and the Queen Pajapati [*Yasodhara rises*] and for you, most honored Princess and for Rahula. Yes, he inquired for you and how Rahula had grown.

Y. Did he speak kindly of us?

K. He always speaks kindly, and he is always calm.

[Music a song, Buddhist Doxology, at a distance]

K. O listen to the music. Here he comes, the glorious Buddha. He must be at the gate.

Y. [*rises again and withdraws.*] I must be gone.

P. O stay, Yasodhara.

Y. No, I will hide me from his very sight; and if I am to him of any value, he will ask for me.

S. Stay, Yasodhara.

Y. He fled from me because I was a hindrance
In his great quest, and he may shun me still.

S. Stay none the less.

P. Nay, let her withdraw; she is in tears and would break down.

Yasodhara and Pajapati withdraw to the partition behind the curtains.

S. You say, that my son is greeted even by kings with clasped hands?

K. Yea, even kings kneel to him.

S. I shall do nothing of the kind. He is my son, my disobedient son, and I am still his father.

Pajapati returns.

The procession of the Buddha comes. Two monks precede and stand at either side of the Buddha. Accompanying monks and other public come into the garden, crowding up to the columns. They all kneel with clasped hands, except Suddhodana.

B. My blessing to this house, to you, O King,
And also to the Queen Pajapati,
My dear good aunt and loving foster mother.

S. At last thou comest back, my wayward son,
But why didst shame me? Why didst thou go begging
Here in my capital? Thou art descended
From ancestors who are a royal race.

B. My ancestors are Buddhas of past ages,
Their thinking has descended unto me,
Their habits and their rules of life I follow,
And not the regulations of a court.

The people rise to their feet again; Kala joins Gopa.

S. Tell me, what are the rules of former Buddhas?

B. They greet you with a stanza in return
For any food or hospitality.

S. I shall be glad to hear what you will say.

B.

Awake from sleep, dispel the dream;

Before the truth's bright ray

Things truly are not what they seem

But truth points out the way.

Truth, truth alone will bring you bliss,

In the next life and e'en in this.

Rahula brings a rose to Buddha.

R. Here, father, is a rose I saved for you
On the big bush where nests the nightingale.

B. And this is Rahula! How you have grown!
Where is your mother?

S. Yasodhara was here,
But would not stay. On hearing that you came
She left the room and said that if at all
You cared for her, you would not fail to ask.

B. But I want to see her, lead me to the place.

Buddha hands his bowl to the King, Pajapati rises and leads the way. At a distance a flourish of trumpets.

D. What military signals do I hear?

S. Go, Captain Devala, see what it means.

Devala exit. Suddhodana hands the bowl to one of the disciples.

B. Ye two disciples shall attend the meeting.
Above all passion has the Buddha risen,
But he will comfort her who loves him dearly.
The Princess' heart is filled with deepest grief,
And in no wise shall any one rebuke her
In whatsoever way she greeteth him.

Pajapati opens the curtain leading to the apartment where Yasodhara sits. Buddha, Pajapati and Suddhodana enter. Yasodhara sinks down before him and holds his feet, weeping. The flourish of trumpets is repeated.

S. [*Grows restless, turns to Pajapati*] These warlike trumpets have a foreign sound
And may forbode the enemy's attack.

He leaves the apartment where Yasodhara is and re-enters the hall, going toward the entrance in the background between the columns.

B. Yasodhara, I bring thee happy tidings,
Deliverance is found, let go thy grief.

Yasodhara looking up to Buddha with deep emotion.

Y. Oh Lord, how did I long for your return,
But in your eyes I have become as naught.

B. My faithful helpmate and my former wife,
Thou hast been dear to me, dear art thou still,
But truth is dearer, and to truth I cling,
While on my quest of truth in former lives,
And also now in this existence, thou
With voluntary sacrifice hast aided me,
Imagine not that thou a hindrance art
To me or to my work and holy mission.
Next to my sainted mother thou art blessed
Among the women of this world. Rejoice
And let grief pass from thy suffering soul.

Y. [*In a kneeling posture*] Grant me a boon, my Lord, a precious boon.

R. Yea, father, grant the boon that mother wants.

B. Speak, Princess, and I listen to thy word.
I know thy heart, Yasodhara; I know
That naught but worthy thoughts dwell in thy mind.

Y. Grant me to help thee in thy noble mission.

I want to join the band of thy disciples.

She pauses and the Buddha hesitates to answer.

I shall be happy if I do thy work.

B. Dost thou not know this boon is but a burden?

Y. The heavier it be, my Lord, the more I welcome it.

R. Oh grant the boon!

B. Not yet
Yasodhara, have women been admitted;
But I foresee the time will come.

Y. My Lord
The time is here if thou but grant the boon.

The Buddha places his right hand in blessing upon Yasodhara's head.

B. So let it be, and so thy boon be granted;
I may not hinder thee if thou insistest.

As Pajapati helps Yasodhara to rise, a third flourish of trumpets is heard, this time near by and loud. Devala returns in great excitement and addresses Suddhodana.

D. My noble liege, an embassy is coming
From Bimbisara, King of Magadha.
They are the kingdom's highest ministers,
And sullen do they look and their retainers.

S. 'Tis most unfortunate, but let them in.

D. There's more to be announced.

S. You look excited.

D. It is but the beginning of the end:
Our scouts are captured, one of them escaped.

He hesitates.

S. Well, Devala?

*D.*He carries evil news.

S. [*With great anxiety*] By Issara! Speak, man! Don't hesitate.

Devala covers his eyes with his hands and sobs.

S. Tell me the worst. Tell me the worst at once.

D. O that I had no tongue to tell the tidings.

S. I will be brave, speak freely! Be a man!

In the meantime the Buddha together with the others has entered the main hall.

D. Our cause is lost. We are surrounded,
Three bridges have been built and General Siha
Stands ready with an overwhelming army
To crush us.

*S.*Once I had a son! But he
Alas! turned mendicant and fails me now!
In him no drop of warrior blood is left,
No spark of honor gloweth in his heart
And our ancestral pride goes down in shame.

B. Transient, my noble father, are all things.
All kingdoms finally must pass away,
But if thou tak'st thy refuge in the truth,
Thou wilt be free from all vicissitudes.
The kingdom of the truth alone endures.

S. [*With indignation.*] Siddhattha, spare thy monkish rant,
Far better than thy cowardly submission,
Far nobler and befitting it would be,
To draw the sword and die a hero's death.

The embassy in solemn procession files in as before at the Jetavana. The Buddha withdraws and is not noticed by the

embassy. Prime Minister Nagadeva (N) addresses King Suddhodana.

N. Oh Maharaja, listen to our message!
The ruler of the mighty Magadha,
King Bimbisara, sends you kindly greetings.
He wants you to entreat the Blessed One,
The holy Buddha, who now stays with you,
Who, as he learneth, is your noble son,
To come to Rajagaha on a visit.
There have been rumors of intended war,
And armies are maneuvering nearby,
But be assured, our noble King means peace.
He would not draw the sword against your state,
Nor wage a war against the Buddha's father.

Suddhodana's eye searches for the Buddha who has been standing behind a column and now steps forward.

S. Oh noble son, oh blessed, highest Buddha,
Thou art indeed a King of Kings on earth!

He kneels down. All members of the embassy do the same.

No crown thou wear'st, no scepter's in thy hand,
Thou needest neither lance, nor sword nor shield,
And yet thou rulest, with mere word and thought,
Thou sway'st the destinies of all the world,
I did not know thy power and thy great worth;
But now I bow me down in humble faith,
And I take refuge in the truth thou preachest.
Henceforth I will devote myself to spread
The kingdom of good will and righteousness.

[Music Buddhist Doxology]

[CURTAIN]

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BUDDHA: A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS AND FOUR INTERLUDES ***

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